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Gift of Blood

Official Organ of
Association of Voluntary Blood Donors,
West Bengal

Blood Donor Motivation in the UK

Dr Jacob Copeman

(Social Anthropologist teaches at Edinburg University, had his PhD from Cambridge University. His thesis was on Blood Donation in India. An Anthropological Approach; spent 15 month in India for his thesis.)

The British National Blood Service (NBS) is part of the National Health Service (NHS). Its website states: 'we guarantee to deliver blood, blood components, blood products and tissues from our 15 blood centres to anywhere in England and North Wales...We also ensure that the blood we supply is properly screened and is safe for patients. Every year we collect, test, process, store and issue 2.5 million blood donations. We depend entirely on voluntary donations from the general public, and try to encourage our existing donors to give three times a year. But we also have a number of other functions. Such as continually carrying out new research into improving the safety of blood. And new ways it can be used to help save more lives. We also provide specialist medical advice and clinical support to hospitals, as well as educating and training transfusion machine specialists' (<http://www.blood.co.uk/pages/f22about.html>). On the one hand, then, the NBS is a logistical and technical organisation responsible for screening and safety, and on the other, it is tasked with motivating potential donors to donate and existing donors to carry on donating. This article

looks at some of the techniques it and the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (NHSiS) uses to promote voluntary blood donation in the UK, in particular its use of recipient testimonies and emphasis on time.

The Donor magazine is published by the NBS and sent to blood donors and recipients. Prominently displayed on the cover is the principle slogan of the NBS: 'Do something Amazing: Give Blood'. Inside there are many quotations from transfusion recipients, which express their gratefulness to the anonymous blood donors who helped save their lives. The magazine contains many inspiring stories of what transfusions have enabled for individuals, families and children. There are humorous items, popular science items about 'secrets in the blood', and numerous articles that thank donors. The key aim of the magazine is to sustain donors' motivation so that they will continue to donate their blood.

Because the voluntary system is anonymous (donors and recipients remaining unknown to one another), the expressions of thanks can only be very general. For example, one letter published in The Donor, from a

spotlight



During the last General Election blood collection from outdoor camps suddenly dropped. Indian Football Association, premier sports organisation of the country, thought of having a blood donation, camp on May 8, 2011 at the Calcutta Maidan and sought the help of AVBDWB to hold this camp. The time was short. How the donors would be mobilised? AVBDWB for the first time, used SMS to call the donors of last Frank Worell Day. The response was prompt and good. Before the last Football Lovers Day some old 500 donors were informed by SMS. This new technology can be used for donor recruitment and retention with success.

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editorial

GIFT OF BLOOD, JULY-SEPTEMBER 2011 NUMBER 104

In 2010, the world collected 93 million units of blood from all types of donors, namely, Voluntary, Replacement and Paid donors. About 1 million of these came from paid sellers from 26 countries of the world. A majority of the countries have replacement donor system. These replacement donors are often paid donors in disguise.

62 countries, many of them are small countries with population of few thousands, have reported to have achieved 100% voluntary blood programme i.e. the entire need of the country are met by voluntary blood donors. In the days of blood communicable fatal diseases, safe blood transfusion cannot be ensured unless the quality of donors is ensured at source. The quality can be assured if donors are healthy voluntary blood donors.

It is being said that if you have to get voluntary blood donors, take the bed as close to the donors as possible at their convenient date and time – that is blood donation camps. There are countries and even in some states of India- blood is collected in mobile vehicles where donors are bled inside the vehicle and non-donors cannot see what is happening inside. In the Indian context open pitched camp type of blood collection is better than blood collection inside a vehicle as 'seeing is believing'; onlookers and non-donors can see what blood donation is, and motivates the non-donor / onlookers to donate blood helps in donor motivation and recruitment.

In 2010-2011, all Govt. blood banks of all the States and Union Territories of India from 60087 camps collected 44508040 units of blood i.e. 74 blood donors per camp. Leading states being (Gujarat 6675 camp with collection 355155 units of blood; Maharashtra 13125 camps with a collection 416788 units; West Bengal 12805 with 542680 units).

Many of the blood banks put the onus of bringing the donors on the patients i.e. replacement / relative donors. A state like West Bengal where the voluntary blood donation has reached its zenith and has become a peoples movement, some of the Govt. blood banks have reduced the number of camps resultant with the fall in blood collection. The guardians of transfusion service should appreciate that by sitting in the blood bank, they would never achieve hundred percent voluntary blood programme.

The blood donation camps have to be increased to achieve total voluntary blood donors. More significantly blood donors have to be motivated and blood collected from voluntary blood donors by reaching the donors in the camps.

In Memorium

Passed away Sukumar Gupta, a life member of AVBDWB, an executive committee member and blood donor motivator and organiser, at Calcutta on May 18, 2011. Born on May 27, 1936 at a village in the Hooghly district, he had his education in local school and college. He worked with Calcutta Corporation, Indian Airlines and then joined West Bengal Legislative Assembly and rose to the position of Deputy Secretary and retired from the Assembly on May 31, 1997. He was an expert in counting preferential votes of Presidential Election, Rajya Sabha election and the like. After retirement, he worked first with Indian Football Association and then with Peoples Relief Committee as an Executive. He was the organiser of first blood donation camp of the



country in any Legislative Assembly. He produced Drama on blood donation both in stage and in electronic media. He was instrumental in adopting all party resolution in West Bengal Legislative Assembly on Blood Donation in 1986. He was one of the organisers of all six once in five-year National and International Conferences held at Calcutta on voluntary blood donation. Delegates will remember him as a suited-booted man moving with temple bell in hand to bring in the delegates after a break for lunch or dinner. May his soul rest in peace.

letters to the editor

I am thankful to you for your kind message of felicitation.

I truly believe that the victory belongs to the people of Bengal whose selfless sacrifice and resilience have ushered this 'Paribartan'. For this, Ma, Mati O Manush deserve to be thanked.

I sincerely trust that I will continue to receive your cooperation in our endeavour to realize the aspirations of the people of Bengal for a glorious future.

Mamata Banerjee
Chief Minister
West Bengal

Thank you very much for your kind wishes. I would be grateful for any specific suggestions that you have to offer.

I have sent your letter, dated July 7, 2011 to the Director IBTM & IH for his comments.

Sanjay Mitra
Principal Secretary
Department of Health and Family
Welfare
Govt of West Bengal

I regularly get the magazine 'Gift of Blood' to my new address.

Herewith I send the information of Shree S. A Kadri's Blood Donation Camp and I request you to highlight this information in the coming issue of Gift of Blood.

Just for your kind information, I am going to donate my 81st voluntary blood donation on July 27, 2011.

I hope you will keep showering your guidance and help to me.

Naryanbhai B. Patel
Gandhinagar
Gujarat

Blood Donation Camp at Night

December 31, 1999. AVBDWB had a few midnight camps starting at 10 pm and ending at 12 midnight. The pay off was: it is the end of a year, end of a decade, end of a century and end of a millennium. The world is entering into a new era. This moment will never come back to you, so do something memorable useful and wonderful. Give blood and save a life.

Youth in great enthusiasm on the New Year Eve donated blood in a hall decorated with ribbon, flower and balloons and later, the blood donors, blood bank staff and the organisers joined in the New Year dinner - a thoroughly enjoyable celebration called Festival of Life By Gift of Blood.

The idea became popular. In the tropical country organising camps in the evening or night is easier. Even the people in districts started organising camps in the evenings or before midnight and the trend caught on.

However, a self proclaimed pundit from the Union Govt. appeared on the scene to inject thought: bleeding donors at night is injurious to the health of the donors. So there should not be any blood collection drive in the evening or night. The motivators of AVBDWB, could not find any rhyme or reason for not bleeding a donor at night nor any plausible reference in any book on the subject - AVBDWB therefore, decided to approach the real experts in the field both at home and abroad. The question sent was:

"In our tropical country, particularly during the summer, organising blood collection in outdoor camps at night is easy. The donors like to assemble in their residential place in relaxed mood

at the end of day's work to donate blood. We have organised several blood donation camps successfully and donors donated blood with enthusiasm, in a cheerful mind.

Of late some of the medical officers collecting blood have raised objection on the plea that bleeding a donor in blood donation camp at night is not good for health of the donors.

We find no contra indication in any textbook. If pilots can command a non-stop international flight, a cricketer can play a day-and-night cricket match, a blood bank can bleed a replacement/relative / rare-group donor at night in the blood bank, we find no logic behind the blood bankers' objection to collect blood at night camps. Is it an apathy to come out and work at night or an administration balance of convenience? You are an expert in the field. We are seeking your scientific opinion whether bleeding a donor at night is any way harmful for the donors."

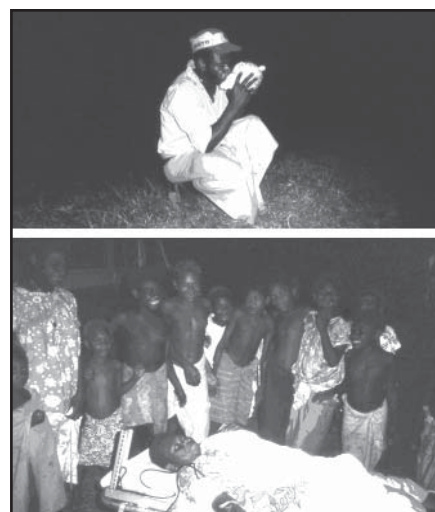
Replies that started pouring in comprehensively squashed the notion.

(1)

I don't see a problem holding evening / night blood camps. The only restriction would be sufficient lighting for the phlebotomist to see insert the needle. In countries where it is extremely hot I would actually recommend holding the blood camps when the weather is slightly cooler which is normally in the evenings.

There is NO scientific data to substantiate cancelling evening / night blood camps

Ms Diane de Coning
Blood Donor Management Consultant
South Africa



lead story

(2)

Although I am some years out of active involvement in blood transfusion matters, for as long as I can remember, in Australia we have had afternoon and evening donor sessions. One of the principal reasons is that the evening is when some voluntary donors have time to offer their gift – and the Blood Service must be ready to accept.

Professor Robert Beal
Australia

(3)

In my opinion, there is no medical reason that would prevent the donation of blood in evenings / nights. Indeed, when I was working in Papua New Guinea, this was a popular event in the villages and was a great learning experience for the young people, who later were

more likely to become blood donors. We enjoyed running them. It was a lot of fun and a great relaxed opportunity to get to know the extended families. I am not aware of any untoward effects to the donors for donating blood in that country. Furthermore, donor rooms are sometimes open in the evenings in western countries and again without harmful effects.

I attach a few photos of blood donation in PNG in the evenings. In some villages the donors were called up by a villager blowing on a conch shell.

Professor Graeme Woodfield
New Zealand

(4)

Based on the experience available, I do not see any contra-indication to blood collection at night. I have taken advice from medical colleagues and we all felt that the volume collected does not cause any challenge to the normal physiological system. I have also taken advice from one colleague who is a senior clinical biochemist. The one thing that came to his mind relates to the diurnal variation of cortisol and some other factors controlled through the pituitary adrenal axis. Although the cortisol level in particular starts dropping around midday the responses for its increase remain normal.

I am sure you know that evening and night blood collection takes place regularly during the month of Ramadan.

I can confirm that there is no indication that evening and night blood collection is harmful to the donors.

Dr Gamal Gabra
UK
Consultant Blood Safety and Transfusion
Medicine

(5)

Something called 'diurnal variation' does exist in Medicine. However, that matters for performing certain pathological blood tests like hormone estimations, particularly steroids. As far as my knowledge goes, it does not matter with blood donation at night.

Prof. Dr. Dileep Wani
Pune, Maharashtra

(6)

I do not think there is any problem in collecting blood at night; however we need to ensure that the donor is not fatigued after the day's job and has some rest before the donation.

Dr. Z S Bharucha
Maharashtra

(7)

I do not see any reason why a donor cannot donate his/ her blood at night. I can see a reason, however, if the blood bank cannot guarantee that the donation is taking place at night under the same safety circumstances which can be achieved during the day. I think of problems with identification and traceability, hygiene, proper blood drawing performances, good light in order to do the tests effectively, safe environment for the donor not only at the blood drawing place itself but also on the road in getting home.

Dr. F.W. Strengers
Former Secretary General ISBT
Netherlands

(8)

The question of blood donation at night time was discussed with few of the WHO experts and our opinion is summarized below.

We are not aware of any literature against blood donation at night. We believe that the principles will remain the same as for any blood donation. However, the issues may be different between donation in the late evening and that occurring after midnight or in the early hours of the morning.

As long as the donor feels well and has followed a normal meal pattern, then they should be OK to donate in the early to late evening. It might be sensible to ensure that the donor is well hydrated and perhaps to prospectively offer fluid prior to donation if there is any doubt.

There could be concerns if donation were to take place after midnight since diurnal rhythms might lead to increased risk in this setting. However there is no evidence to volume stress being compromised when the physiology is in sleep mode.

Ultimately we suppose that the appropriate approach would be to

carefully monitor the introduction of any change with a particular emphasis on adverse event rates and the frequency of poor collection volumes (donor haemovigilance in practice)

The usual recommendation for blood donation is: prior to donating, the donor should get a good rest, drink plenty of fluids and eat within 2-3 hours.

Dr. Neelam Dhirga
WHO Geneva

(9)

I have donated in the past in the night (in other blood banks- late 80s and early 90s). Donation did happen at night in many parts of the world during hours of crisis.

I presume the reasons for the current practice of not accepting donations in the night are: Blood Bank doctor does not want to work beyond his/her hours. Technically there is no contra-indication for donating blood at night.

Dr. P. Srinivasan M. D.
Chairman, Jeevan Blood Bank
Chennai, India

(10)

In answer to your question as to whether there are any contra-indications for blood donation in the evening hours, I am aware that many centers in the USA, UK and Europe open specifically to cater for Blood Donors who are unable to donate during the day due to work and other commitments. The centers to which I refer comply with internationally accepted standards of excellence in the selection and care of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation.

Provided the potential blood donors receive internationally recognized standards of care, which will include making sure that the donor is well hydrated and is not hypoglycaemic, after working hard all day, the donation time is not relevant. I am sure that your service is well aware of the standard requirements and ensures they are implemented.

Those objecting to blood donation taking place in the evenings due to a perceived detrimental effect on the health of the donor should provide scientific evidence to support this claim.

I am not aware of any contra-indication

for blood donations carried out in the evenings, after working hours.

Dr Jean C Emmanuel MD
(Former Director, Blood Safety & Clinical Technology WHO, Zimbabwe

(11)

Although I am already retired from the FRC Blood Service I still follow some of the literature, in which I have never found any indication that donation in the evenings or even at night would be harmful to the donor. Here in Finland we used to organise mobile donations in the evenings rather regularly and never had any complications. You may know that especially in the winter time the sun may be up in northern Finland only for a few hours during midday and the donations often are done in the dark and/or in the evenings.

In short donation in the evenings or at night has no more physiological effect to the donor than donation in daylight.

Dr Jukka Koistinen
Finland

(12)

In blood donation the following are critical :

1. Make sure that blood donation criteria

are fulfilled by any potential donor and that the established operating procedures are strictly followed,

2. The environment should be safe for the donor and for the blood collected,

3. Voluntary donation is preferred to replacement donation (in your message below, you mentioned replacement donation). WHO advocates voluntary and regular blood donation,

The blood bank staff may have time constraints; there is a need to have a frank dialogue between the Association of Voluntary Blood Donors and BTS staff to avoid losing safe and regular blood donors.

I hope these few comments would help solve the problem

Dr. Jean Baptiste Tapko
Regional Adviser Blood Safety and Laboratory Service
WHO Regional Office for Africa, Congo

Now so many experts from all parts of the globe have equivocally opined that there is no harm in bleeding a donor at evening or night. What about the Indian expert by virtue of his chair who declared that donors should not be bled at night on medical ground?

Henry Ford in his book "My Life and Work" published in 1923, in the first chapter, titled The Beginning of a

Business wrote "All the wise people demonstrated conclusively that the engine could not compete with steam. They never thought that it might carve out a career for itself. This is the way with wise people – they are so wise and practical that they always know to a dot just why something cannot be done; they always know the limitations. That is why I never employ an expert in full bloom. If ever I wanted to kill opposition by unfair means, I would endow the opposition with experts. They would have so much good advice that I could be sure they would do little work."

Blood donation camp in the evening or night is an idea most suitable in tropical countries, particularly during summer. Donors love it. So many people from the field have confirmed that there is no harm in bleeding donors at night. The blood banks which are a 24x7 hours service should send blood collection team to camps in the evenings and night if the country has to achieve much cherished hundred percent voluntary blood donation. As the saying goes – "If you have to get voluntary blood donors, take the donors bed as close to the donors as possible on their convenient date and time without expecting the donors to come to blood bank to donate blood."

Blood Donor...
Contd. from Page 1

transfusion recipient, expresses thanks to all B-type donors, and a letter I received from the NBS thanks me for donating 'on behalf of everyone who has ever had a blood transfusion'. These are general, abstract expressions of thankfulness, aimed at a mixed assortment of anonymous donors.

An (NHSiS) employee told me that 'we train the staff to make people feel good about donating'. Publicising the testimony of recipients forms an important part of this. In The Donor magazine, under the title 'A lot to say thank you for', a series of events is described that were held around Britain that aimed to celebrate the 'loyalty and dedication' of donors. The magazine also encourages recipients to come forward and tell their story in order to help the service say 'thank you'. Another NBS leaflet contains the words: 'Thank you for your generosity in joining with us to help save lives by giving blood. Donating blood is one of the most generous gifts anyone can give and no one appreciates

this amazing gesture more than those you help to save'. Donors are thanked and praised as a means of encouraging them to give again.

The NBS provides blood donors with a card that (a) shows that they are blood donors, and (b) indicates how many times they have given their blood. The card is quite similar to the 'loyalty' cards provided by UK supermarkets in order to reward repeat shopping. The donor card comes in a range of eight colours, each indicating the number of times a donor has given blood. 'Points' come from giving rather than spending; it is a neat reversal that sustains a similar 'supermarket' logic of loyalty and reward. The cards possess barcodes on them in order to speed up processing at future donations. After a donor first gives blood in the UK they are sent a letter which states: 'Congratulations on becoming a blood donor. You're now part of a special group, because only 6% of people in this country give blood. So I'm pleased to enclose your new donor

card, showing that you are one of these amazing people who helps to save lives'. The card states: 'I do something amazing. I give blood'. The card is, therefore, a bit like a membership card. It indicates that one belongs to a 'special group'.

In addition to emphasising that donors are members of a special group of people and using recipient testimonies to thank donors, there is also a striking emphasis in these publicity materials on time – more specifically, lifetime. Obviously, a successful blood transfusion helps sustain the recipient's lifetime. It also takes time (just a few minutes) to donate blood. People I spoke with in the NHSiS told me that they see people's time as being the service's prime competitor (encouraging potential donors to take the time to donate). In this way a donor must give some of their time to donate, and this then, in an ideal situation, this will help sustain a substantial amount of the recipient's lifetime.

In The Donor magazine, transfusion

contd. on page 6

home and abroad

WEST BENGAL

31st year's Frank Worrell Day's mass blood donation was organised at Dr B.C Ray Club House on February 3, 2011. 866 donors donated blood at Calcutta and there were 23 simultaneous camps in all the 19 districts of the state concurrently on the same day where 702 donors donated thereby making the day's tally of 1708. The donors were presented with a CAB Badge and a certificate signed by former Sri Lanka, Captain Sanat Jaysurya.

RUSSIA

In Russia April 20 is observed as the National Blood Donor Day. In 1832, on this day, Dr. Andrey Wolf successfully transfused blood at St. Petersburg with Dr James Blundell Technology. On this day, the resume of the Annual National Award for the Best Donor of Russia is announced. But awards

are presented to the recipient on the World Blood Donor Day, June 14.

The Federal Annual budget for the blood service is 64727378 thousand rouble (1 euro = 43 roubles and 1 euro = ₹ 73) Regional blood services are also funded by regional budgets. First modern plasma fractionation plant in Kirov is being constructed. The planned annual output of the plant is 6000.000 litres of plasma. More than 5000 transfusionists are in Russia and there are many more in the former USSR Russian speaking countries.

SOUTH AFRICA

In spite of a demand for transfusion specialists, there is a lack of applications for these trainee and consultant posts in South Africa. The lower professional profile of these posts may play a role. South Africa has used a different approach to solve the problem of transfusion medicine training of medical doctors. They have not tried to make transfusion medicine a speciality field, but rather they offer a postgraduate diploma in transfusion medicine. This is a two-year part-time course to doctors who have an interest in transfusion. This has been very well received, with 13 students completing the course after first intake, currently 19 students are enrolled.

Blood Donor...
Contd. from Page 5

recipients and their families emphasise the 'extra' time they have received. For example, in 2003 it published a letter from the daughter of a transfusion recipient: 'In August, my father, then 86, was suddenly diagnosed with advanced bladder cancer. He opted for an operation, and to my surprise received six pints of blood. Unfortunately he only lived for two more days, but the blood gave him and our family precious extra time, and made him feel better'. This 'extra' time is experienced not only by the recipient whose lifetime is hopefully extended, but also by the recipient's family members who are able to savour continuing precious moments with their ill relative. In an article titled 'The precious gift of time', readers of The Donor are told that for people who are dying, it is time that is the principal benefit of transfusion, both quantitatively (extra time) and qualitatively (it can improve the quality of their lifetime). Much

emphasis is placed on the enablement of precious 'family' time for people who must adjust to a definite future loss. The article quotes a community nurse: 'these vital transfusions give patients a better quality of life. It gives them the energy and ability to enjoy this precious, final time with their families'. The article goes on: 'But this time is often a gift that only blood can provide'.

In another example, Edmund is described as a man with a rare and terminal bone marrow disease that meant he could not produce his own blood. His disease would have resulted in death very soon after initial diagnosis were it not for the three units of blood that he received every two weeks: 'the extra years of life [that] blood gave him was a very precious gift'. The article ends with a plea from Edmund's family that refers back to the earlier point about the need for a donor to give time

contd. on page 7

around the world

Kolkata, West Bengal, India, July 2, 2011

Inauguration of 22nd Diploma Course Blood Donor Motivators and Science of Blood at Indumati Sabhagriha
E-mail: avbdwb@gmail.com

**Suryanagar, Siliguri, West Bengal
August 19, 20, & 21, 2011**

25th State Conference of Social Workers connected with Voluntary Blood Donation Movement
Organiser: Siliguri Suryanagar Samaj Kalyan Samity
E-mail: ssks123@rediffmail.com

**Kolkata, West Bengal, India
August 23, 2011**

30th Rakhi Bandhan Day's National Integration Blood Donation Camp at Nehru Children's Museum
E-mail: avbdwb@gmail.com

**Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
October 14 and 15, 2011**

National Workshop on Quality Assurance in Transfusion Services
Organised by Indian Society of Blood Transfusion and Immunohaematology
Karnataka
E-mail: shivram@monipalhospitals.com

**Taipei, Taiwan
November 16-19, 2011**

XXII Regional Congress of the International Society of Blood Transfusion
Secretariat
Euro Congress International
E-mail: isbt.taipei@eurocongress.com

Blood Donor...
Contd. from Page 6

in order for a recipient to receive it: 'It costs nothing to be a blood donor, only your time, and one day your family and friends may find themselves in a similar situation, relying on blood to give them some more time'.

An NHSiS employee told me about the difficulties experienced by the service in 'capturing' people's time to donate: 'Sundays used to be very, very busy sessions, but that's changed because people don't have time to sit and wait for an hour - they used to sit and gossip with their friend for a while. It was a community thing. But now the shops are open on Sundays, and DIY also made a difference'. It is harder now to 'capture' people's time. Perhaps this helps explain the emphasis on the time that results for recipients: while it may take a little time to donate your blood, just think how much time you are giving someone else and how much it will be appreciated! In a recent issue of Gift of Blood (October-December 2010), it was shown that even India's MPs decline to donate blood for reasons of fear, social taboo and superstition. In the UK, it seems that it is time - the sense the modern life provides us with very little of it - that is one of the largest factors obstructing blood donation. Therefore, there has been a renewed emphasis in the UK on taking donor beds to donors (e.g. their places of work) in order to save their time and make it easier for them to donate.

The UK service is not alone, however, in drawing attention to the centrality of time in respect of both the donation and transfusion of blood. A poster designed and printed by the Association of Voluntary Blood Donors, West Bengal shows a photograph of a small child excitedly observing her birthday cake. The caption reads: 'This is me... I am a normal 6 year old, but I live because 100s have given the blood which flows in my veins. Make our todays possible by donating blood'. The cake stands for the accumulation of time that transfusions have facilitated - the birthday is celebrated in a today extending into a tomorrow. But surely the most vivid and striking example of promotional material emphasizing time is a poster, also produced by the AVBDWB, that features an egg timer with a blood drop running through it, and the caption: 'Time is defeated by blood donation. If you spend only five minutes you can save a whole life-time'.



**TAKING THE
MEDICINE -
A SHORT HISTORY
OF MEDICINE'S
BEAUTIFUL
IDEA AND OUR
DIFFICULTY IN
SWALLOWING IT**

Druin Burch
Vintage Books
London U.K. £ 30
317 pages

Motivators have to talk to different people in formal and informal sessions. Motivators should be well read persons having capability to talk on various subjects. Here is a book on history of medicine written in 2010 by Dr Druin Burch of National Health Service of U.K which will be interesting reading for donor motivators. Apart from Prologue, Bibliography, Acknowledgment and Index the book has 25 chapters starting from early medicine down to modern medicines.

In the field of transfusion medicine is the caution of Dr Karl Landsteiner uttered in 1908 "Do not Transfuse blood unless it is life saving".

The Author of the book in the preamble says "Doctors for most of human history have killed their patients far more often than they have saved them". In the third chapter titled Self-Confidence and Quinine the author writes:

"I die by the help of too many physicians" was supposed to have been the final sentiments on the lips of Alexander the great in 323 B.C. Four hundred years later, Pliny suggested a new common epitaph echoing Alexander. "It was the crowd of physicians that killed me" was an easy enough sentiment for someone to declare upon his death a harder one to accept in the days leading up to it. In Chapter 24 titled Revolutionary Confidence, the author writes:

"Thursday 12 December was a cold day in Virginia. Washington rode around his farm in rain, hail and snow, then had his evening meal without changing his wet clothes. The next day he felt unwell and spent it quietly staying mostly indoors. In the evening he read aloud to his wife before going to bed. Between two and three in the morning, Washington woke her to tell

that he felt worse. In the morning of the Saturday, Washington asked his plantation supervisor to bleed him. The man took away around a third of a litre of Washington's blood. Before lunch time the first doctor arrived. He bled Washington twice more, removing another litre and a quarter litres (over two pints) of blood. When the next doctor arrived in the middle of the afternoon, Washington was bled another full litre. Mercury was given in order to induce diarrhoea. Repeated doses of drugs were used to make Washington to vomit. Hot cups were applied to his flesh to raise up blood filled blisters.

Washington probably contained about five litres of blood, of which over half was directly removed by bleeding. The vomiting, diarrhoea and blistering helped dehydrate him further, as did the fever and inflammation that came from being unwell in the first place. Towards the end of the Saturday, the physicians now crowding around Washington's bed noticed that his blood seemed different. Rather than flowing with brisk freedom when a vein or artery was opened, it was thick and sticky and only oozed away slowly.

'Pray take no more trouble about me', Washington told his doctor 'Let me go quietly.' He died a little after ten o'clock on the Saturday night December 14, 1797.

The book ends with the paragraph "No statistical test or trial design will help tell you if you are in love, or if you are loved in return. That does not mean that trials and statistics are useless, only that they have a place. That place is a fine one. Experiments and numbers reveal truths: they are tools for understanding the world and for making it better."

bookshelf

Farewell Gift

Gujarat State Bank of India Employees' Union has a long-standing culture of community service like blood donation, tree plantation, malaria eradication, helping the down-trodden, helping the physically challenged children and donating money for social cause.

The General Secretary of the white collar Trade Union, Shiri S.A. Kadri, himself a centurion blood donor wanted a gift one year before his retirement on attaining the age of sixty. The unique gift he asked for from his union - a blood donation camp for 365 days between May 1, 2009 and April 30, 2010. Central Committee of the union decided to honour its leader to celebrate the Shashtipurti of S. A Kadri and a committee was formed to conduct non-stop blood donation camp for 365 days. Ahmedabad Red Cross Society



Dr Smt Kamala Benewal, Governor of Gujarat feliciating Sri S.A. Kadri

and the Union had several meetings to conduct this non-stop programme. Ultimately from 365 camps, 43950 units of blood could be collected. Out of these 365 camps Sri Kadri was personally present in as many as 40 camps. The Times of India gave a front page coverage of the feat of the trade union leader in the field of blood donation. On the Closing Ceremony of Blood

Donation Programme, the Governor of Gujarat Dr Smt Kamala Beniwal felicitated Sri Kadri.

On the World Blood Donor Day of 2011, June 14, 'SHERDIL' Gujarat Award was presented to State Bank of India Employees Union, Ahmedabad, signed by the Governor, Chief Minister, Health Minister of Gujarat for organizing 555 camps and collecting 44,444 units of blood.

Reasons for Donating Blood



Altruism



Service to the community



Sense of social duty



Gaining experience



Personal obligation



Social pressure



Group pressure



For helping friends and relatives



For recognition and awards



For blood donor's card



Token of becoming adult



Motivator's appeal or speech